



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

It is a sad picture and a grave indictment. And in his Preface Mr. Adams tells us that "all theories contained in the book, whether religious or economic, are the effect and not the cause of the way in which the facts unfolded themselves. I have been passive." This is a statement which gives us pause; for is it not a commonplace that to think oneself "passive" in such an investigation as this is to be greatly self-deluded? And the commonplace is confirmed by Mr. Adams's philosophy of energy, which I have already indicated,—a philosophy which reduces every human phenomenon to its lowest terms, and, as a consequence, inevitably besets us with metaphors behind and before. If all is energy, it would require a much larger book than this to explain the sense in which we are to understand such terms as fear, greed, war, imagination, art, religion, society, trade, and countless others; but Mr. Adams delivers his philosophy *ex cathedra*, and leaves us to make what we can of the terms. However, leaving its philosophy out of account, the book is of very great interest and suggestiveness. It is evidently the result of long and patient labor, and on the whole it is well arranged and clearly expressed. But the real moral of it appears to me to be the ultimate folly and futility of every attempt to rob a community of its wealth, whether it be by the unfair competition of slave labor, by the power of religious fear, by conquest, by confiscation, or by undue limitation of the currency.

R. LATTA.

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS, SCOTLAND.

THE CROWD: A Study of the Popular Mind. By Gustave Le Bon. English translation. London: T. Fisher Unwin. Pp. xxiv., 230.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PEOPLES. By Gustave Le Bon. English translation. London: T. Fisher Unwin. Pp. xx., 236.

These two books are studies of the "collective mind," firstly, as it manifests itself in the crowd, and, secondly, as it appears in the race. Both are brightly written, acute and interesting, and both are, we should imagine, introductory to a later book just advertised, "The Psychology of Socialism." For these studies point a moral with great vigor, and the moral is a warning against the advent of Socialism which the author regards as imminent, and which means for him the breaking down of civilization into barbarism.

To show how the author reaches his moral, and also to show how much there is of interest in what he says apart from that, we must give a short account of his argument.

The "crowd" to be considered is not a mere assembly of persons, but an assembly in which a "collective mind" has been formed. To such a crowd the author applies the epithets "organized" or "psychological," of which the first seems ill-chosen, since it is just its lack of organization which makes the crowd what it is.

Such a psychological crowd "forms a single being, and is subject to the law of the mental unity of crowds." Its most striking characteristic is that the individuals composing it will feel, think, and act quite differently from what they would do in their individual capacities, and for the following reasons: First, the individual in a crowd acquires a sense of power which allows him to yield to instincts which he must keep under restraint when unsupported by numbers; while, again, being as a member of a crowd anonymous, he loses the further control of responsibility. Next, he is under the influence of that contagion which it is easy to feel in a crowd, but difficult to explain. And finally, owing to the above causes, combined with excitement and the presence of some dominant interest, he is in the mental condition characterized by psychologists as suggestibility.

The author then considers the further characteristics of such a crowd, and his view may be briefly illustrated by citing a few of these, such as its impulsiveness, mobility, instability, credulity, suggestibility, exaggerations, intolerance, dictatorialness, and conservatism. That a "mind" possessed by these qualities should not be capable of much intelligence is not strange, and, indeed, the author is careful to compare it to the feminine mind. After that we are not surprised to hear that it does not reason, that it accepts or rejects ideas as a whole, that it tolerates neither discussion nor contradiction, and that suggestions brought to bear on it invade the entire field of its understanding and tend at once to transform themselves into acts. The rest of the book consists in developing and illustrating the consequences of these characteristics, and discussing the factors by which the beliefs and opinions of crowds are determined. An important distinction is drawn between the "great permanent beliefs which endure for several centuries, and on which an active civilization may rest," and "the transitory changing opinions . . . of which every age sees the birth and dis-

appearance." The former are characteristics of a racial mind, and it is owing to them that the crowd becomes a people; as they disappear "the genius of the race entirely disappears; it is a mere swarm of isolated individuals and returns to its original state,—that of a crowd. . . . The populace is sovereign, and the tide of barbarism mounts." It is this Era of Crowds upon which, as our author gloomily surmises, we are now entering; for to him the people which has shaken off old traditions and is trying to understand and govern itself is synonymous with his "psychological crowd." It is probable that if M. Le Bon's experience had brought him more into contact with British stolidity he would have recognized that the hysterical suggestible crowd—though doubtless it exists—is almost as abnormal as the hypnotized individual; and that the hope of democracies rests on the real power of the "collective mind" to take its problems home and work them out to rational conclusions.

In the second book, "The Psychology of Peoples," the question of race characteristics is resumed, and their influence upon the evolution of the race discussed. A race is regarded by the author as a permanent being composed of the long succession of the dead as well as of the living. "The dead, being infinitely more numerous than the living, are infinitely more powerful. They reign over the vast domain of the unconscious, that invisible domain which exerts the sway over all the manifestations of the intelligence and of character." Centuries are needed for the hereditary accumulations by which is created the community of sentiments, beliefs, and interests which forms the identical and permanent mental constitution of a people; but comparatively few years suffice to break it down when once the process of decay has begun. "Like anatomic species, psychological species are subject to the action of time. Always slow in being formed, it is possible for them to disappear very rapidly;" and this decay takes place when forces are set in motion which break down the old beliefs and disturb the racial character. Symptoms of this decadence are showing themselves more especially in the Latin nations, which are losing initiative, energy, and will, and have for sole ideal the satisfaction of material wants. M. Le Bon, it will be seen, shares M. Demolins' apprehension for the future of the race to which he belongs, and is even more pessimistic in his forebodings.

H. BOSANQUET.

LONDON.